

Preventing Burglary

Burglars go through neighborhoods looking for uncut lawns and stuffed mailboxes. In the evening, they look for darkened houses or lights that have been left on too long.

Don't tempt a thief

- Lawn mowers, snow blowers, barbecues and bicycles are best stored out of sight.
- · Always lock your garden sheds and garages.
- · Use curtains on garage and basement windows.
- Never leave notes on your door such as "Gone shopping."

Locks...get the best

- No lock, regardless of its quality, can be truly effective. Key-in dead bolt locks provide minimum security.
 Ask a locksmith for advice on your situation.
- Change locks immediately if your keys are lost or stolen.
- When moving into a new home, have all locks changed.

Outside

- Have adequate exterior lighting. A motion-sensitive light is recommended for backyards.
- Trim trees and shrubs so that they cannot be used as hiding places for intruders.
- Make sure your door hinges are on the inside.

Windows

- Most windows can be pinned for security.
- Drill a 3/16" hole on a slight downward slant through the inside window frame and halfway into the outside frame place a nail in the hole to secure the window.

Alarms

- An alarm system is excellent for home security. It provides peace of mind to homeowners, especially while on vacation. There is a wide variety of alarm systems on the market.
- Make several inquiries to different companies for the best security system available to you.

If you come home to find an unexplained open/broken window or door

- Do not enter the perpetrator may still be inside.
- Use a neighbor's phone to call police.
- Do not touch anything or clean up until the police have inspected for evidence.
- Write down the license plate numbers of any suspicious vehicles.
- Note the descriptions of any suspicious persons.



Deterring Vehicle Theft

Never leave your keys in the ignition or leave the car running, even for a moment. Estimates indicate that 80% of all stolen vehicles were left unlocked, and 40% had keys in the ignition. Some auto thieves hang around convenience stores and gas stations.

Park your car in a well-lit, busy area. This is for your personal safety as well as for the safety of your car.

Do not leave ANYTHING visible in the passenger compartment of your car when parking. Lock all items in the trunk prior to arriving at your destination. Car alarms are excellent for deterring thieves.

Reducing the Risk of Violent Crime

Sexual Assault

- Use initials instead of first names on mail boxes and phone listings.
- Avoid remaining alone in an apartment laundry room or parking garage.
- Never admit on the telephone or at the door that you are alone.
- It is risky to accept a ride home from someone you have just met.
- If you decide to physically resist assault, remember that your goal is to incapacitate the attacker long enough to run to safety and get help.
- If you have been a victim of sexual assault, call police immediately. Do not bathe or change clothes or you may destroy valuable evidence.

Robbery

Avoid carrying valuable items or large amounts of money. Always think ahead. For example, when traveling at night, have your keys ready to enter the house or to start the car. If a robber confronts you, the best advice is to cooperate. If you resist, there is a greater chance that you may be hurt.

Bank Machines

When using an automatic bank teller, always be watchful of any suspicious people around you. The chances of being robbed at night are much greater, especially if you are alone. If you find someone waiting and watching outside in the area of an ATM machine, do not use it. Leave the area and report the incident to the Police immediately. You could save someone else from being a victim of crime.

If possible, use ATM machines located in well-populated grocery stores or gas filling stations to reduce your risk of becoming a victim.



Understanding and Coping with Elder Abuse

Sexual Assault

Elder abuse is a crime. It is harm done to a senior by someone he/she knows and trusts such as a family member, visitor, social worker, doctor or nurse.

WARNING SIGNS OF ELDER ABUSE

Elder abuse can be difficult to discuss because the people doing the abuse are usually people the senior knows and trusts. It is not often reported because the senior is afraid of revenge by the abuser or is ashamed that they cannot handle the abuse in the home themselves or the senior is concerned with being labeled as too demanding or senile. Here are some of the warning signs to look for.

Physical abuse:

Hitting, beating, pushing, sexual assault, forcing consumption of additional drugs, locking the senior in a room or house. Look for:

- unusual cuts, bruises, burns, bites
- poor personal hygiene
- untreated bed sores
- dirty clothing & linen
- emotional withdrawal

Emotional abuse:

Yelling, use of harsh words, ignoring the senior, treating the senior like a child, and not allowing the senior to speak with others. Look for:

- confusion
- fear and anxiety
- · refusal to speak in front of someone
- · certain subjects will not be discussed

Financial abuse:

Not allowing the senior to spend money the way he/she wants; telling lies to get money or property from the senior; stealing money, jewelry or other possessions; forcing a senior to sell or give away property or sign Power of Attorney. Look for:

- malnutrition
- belongings are missing
- sudden changes in senior's will
- · signing of Power of Attorney without discussing with a lawyer



Dealing with Nuisance Phone Calls

Nuisance calls, obscene calls and threatening calls range from relatively harmless pranks initiated by children, through offensive and potentially harmful acts, to clearly dangerous threats that must be countered. Nuisance calls are commonly made by children and are probably harmless. You may, however, want to report them to the police.

THE BEST ADVICE IS TO SIMPLY HANG UP. Do not encourage a return call. If the calls persist to the point that they become harassment, report them to the police. Privacy Manager, Call Display, and Last Call Return are services available on your phone that you may find helpful.

Obscene calls represent abnormal behavior that could be potentially dangerous. People who make obscene calls find gratification from the response to the recipient. The best initial reaction is to hang up immediately. Telephone companies have recommended that women list their names in the telephone directory without the prefix "Miss" or "Mrs." and to use initials only of first names. Another possibility for those bothered by obscene calls is to obtain an unlisted telephone number.

If obscene calls persist, report the calls to the police in order to obtain a case number. After you obtain the case number, call your local telephone service provider and request a telephone "trap" to be placed on the telephone number receiving the unwanted calls. In order to improve the chance of finding the source of these calls, carefully follow the instructions provided by the telephone service provider. Also, consider recording these telephone calls. These recordings would be helpful in positively identifying the person calling as well as enhancing their prosecution in a criminal court.

What To Do If Your Purse or Wallet is Lost or Stolen

To help account for the contents of your wallet, it is a good practice to photocopy them on a periodic basis. Copy both sides of each license, credit card, library card, video rental card, etc. If your wallet or purse is stolen, the account numbers and phone numbers will be available to facilitate the calls you make to report your cards stolen. Keep the photocopy in a safe place.

If your wallet or purse is lost or stolen, cancel your credit cards immediately, but, remember, the key is having the toll free numbers and your card numbers handy so you know whom to call. Keep those where you can find them easily. File a police report in the jurisdiction where it was stolen. This will provide credit companies proof you were diligent, and is a first step toward an investigation.



Call the three national credit-reporting organizations and the Social Security Administration immediately to place a fraud alert on your name and social security number. The numbers are:

• Equifax: 1-800-525-6285

• Experian (formerly TRW): 1-888-397-3742

Trans Union: 1-800-680-7289

• Social Security Administration (fraud line): 1-800-269-0271

Marking Your Property

In case of theft, your chances of recovery are increased if your property is marked. The majority of stolen items recovered by police cannot be identified and returned to owners. Burglars do not like property that is marked because it is hard to sell.

- Record serial numbers and descriptions of your possessions.
- Use an electric engraving pencil to engrave an identification number on your possessions.
- Complete a home inventory of your personal belongings along with a videotape or photograph of each item
 of value.

Home Security

Opening Your Doors to Strangers:

- Take great care . . . you don't ever have to open the door.
- Peepholes . . . to see who's there: Wide-angle peepholes are a highly recommended viewing device because the person outside does not know that you see him/her. If the peephole is covered, do not open the door.
- Chain locks ... a false sense of safety: Chain locks are not recommended because they are mounted with short screws and have weak chains.
- Door wedges really work: A door wedge is a better alternative when you wish to open your door only a few inches to speak to a stranger. This device is useful for children and women who are alone at home. It can be found in most hardware stores.

Use Smoke Alarms - test them regularly and replace batteries when needed.



Apartment Security

Security in an apartment building is as effective as you make it. Don't leave it entirely up to the superintendent of the building or the police. By following these suggestions you can make the building a safer place in which to live:

- Report suspicious persons to the building superintendent and/or police.
- When the buzzer rings, check the identity of the caller before opening the door. Refer unknown persons to the Apartment Manager or Apartment Security.
- Do not identify yourself as a female living alone use only your initials on the building directory.
- Secure sliding doors on the balcony with "jimmy bars."
- Use more than one lock on the door.
- Use peepholes, door wedges and smoke alarms.

Security at Work

Never leave handbags on desks or wallets and cellular telephones in coat pockets in your absence. Take them with you. If a locker is provided for you at work, use it and lock it. Keep the key or combination with you or in a secure place.

If you handle money at work, always keep it in a safe place. Don't leave petty cash in an unlocked drawer during the day. At night, put it in the safe or remove it from the building altogether.

Be careful with keys. Don't put spares in an unlocked drawer.

Lock windows in your absence. It's so easy to forget, especially in the summertime, and a thief can come and go in a matter of minutes.

Never assume a stranger wandering in the building is an employee. Even a simple "May I help you" can discourage the dishonest without interfering with the legitimate visitor. Never leave visitors alone in the office. Check by telephone to see if someone can see them.

Security on the Street

On Foot:

- Stay in well-lighted, busy areas. Avoid walking alone and avoid known trouble spots.
- When you carry a purse, hold it close to your body rather than by the handles. Do not wrap purse straps around your wrist, because you can get hurt in a struggle.



- Carry only what you need in a purse or wallet, not everything you have.
- Avoid using shortcuts through dark alleys, fields, or vacant lots.
- If you think you're being followed, cross the street and change directions a few times. Go quickly to a well-lighted place with lots of people. Do not go home. You don't want an attacker to know where you live.

On Wheels:

- Keep your car in good running condition
- Always roll up the windows and lock car doors
- · Avoid parking in isolated areas. Be especially alert in lots and underground parking garages
- Don't pick up hitchhikers
- If you think someone is following you, don't head home. Drive to the nearest police or fire station, gas station, or other open business to get help

Personal Safety Tips

Walk Assertively:

Street criminals often choose their victims at random, preying on people who appear easily intimidated and vulnerable. Assertive body language can help prevent assault. Look as though you may cause an uproar if bothered.

Walk with a Companion:

The old "safety in numbers" cliché is as accurate as ever. When you walk at night with a companion, continue to be AWARE AND ALERT.

Stick to Well-Lighted Walkways:

Avoid sidewalks where shrubs, alleys and dark doorways can hide attackers.

Protect Yourself in a Crowd:

In a crowd, wear your purse over your shoulder with the opening toward your body. If someone grabs it, let go. Put wallets in a front pocket or your jacket. If you feel that you are being followed, cross the street and change directions a few times. Walk or run quickly to a well-lighted shop or where crowds of people can help if needed. DO NOT GO HOME. You don't want to let an attacker know where you live.

Using an Elevator:

When using an elevator, be with friends or family. Stand close to the door and near the controls with your back against a wall. If a situation arises press the alarm button and press as many floor buttons as possible, this will afford more opportunities for escape.



Information on the Telephone:

Avoid giving out personal information on the telephone. Never say you are alone. Discourage obscene callers by using the "No Reaction" tactic and hang up immediately. If you receive additional calls, report the incident to the police.

Holiday Safety Tips

Homes jam-packed with the glitter of gift packages. Stores, malls and streets teeming with unsuspecting shoppers. People rushing around, stressed out and careless, looking for last-minute gifts, trying to get everything done.

The following tips are suggested by the Indianapolis Metropolitan Police Department and CrimeWatch to help keep you and your loved ones safe during the holiday season.

If You Are Traveling:

- Get automatic timers for your lights at home. Remember to set them at different times. Make sure to try
 them the day before you leave, just to make sure they are set properly.
- Ask a neighbor to watch your home, shovel snow, and park in the driveway from time to time. Have them set
 one of their trash cans out as if yours on pickup day.
- Don't forget to have mail and newspapers picked up by a neighbor, or delivery stopped. It is especially
 important that neighbors pick up flyers and pamphlets that are not sent by regular mail
- Don't leave holiday packages where they can be seen.
- When you arrive at your destination, even if a hotel room, make sure to use the same safety tips as you do at home.
- Make sure your cellular telephone is in working order in case of emergency.
- Make sure your vehicle is in good running order.
- Pack a survival kit for emergencies -- blanket, candles, radio, non-perishable food, bottled water, games for children. Keep the kit in your vehicle throughout the winter months.

At Home:

- Be extra cautious about locking doors and windows when you leave your house or apartment, even for a few
 minutes. And don't forget to lock them when you are at home.
- Don't display holiday gifts where they can be seen from a window or doorway. Store them away until needed. Even empty wrapped boxes are inviting to criminals.
- Make sure to keep ALL receipts for purchases, not only to make needed exchanges but also to check against credit card statements.



- Mark all new purchases of electronic equipment with identification numbers, and keep a record of the serial number, make, and model for insurance.
- Jewelry and expensive clothing should have identification marks or engravings of some type.
- Be wary of solicitations for charitable donations. If in doubt, call the telephone number of the organization in the telephone directory.
- · Check your credit history after the holidays to make sure your identity has not been comprised.
- Test smoke detectors and replace batteries.
- Use only fire resistant ornaments on a holiday tree, and make sure electric lights are in good working order. Don't leave them on overnight or when you are away, even if only for a short time.
- If you have a fireplace, make sure to keep your tree and other decorations at a safe distance from the fire box.
- If you have houseguests, advise them of your security precautions and make sure they follow them.
- Be extra careful of strangers coming to your door. Criminals sometimes pose as couriers delivering gifts. The applies to businesses as well as residences.
- After the fun, don't take the boxes from expensive gifts to the trash without cutting them up and taking any identifiable information from them. If your community has a recycling bin close, cut the boxes up and put them in it. At the very least, put boxes inside a non-clear trash bag.

Shopping:

- Shop before dark if possible, and with a friend. Park only in well-lighted parking lots.
- Lock your packages and gifts in your vehicle's trunk. Keep your vehicle's doors locked and windows closed.
- Avoid carrying large sums of money. Pay for purchases with a check, credit card, or debit card when
 possible.
- To discourage purse-snatches, don't overburden yourself with packages. Have your purchases delivered whenever practical.
- Be extra careful with purses and wallets. Carry only what you need, and put it in a pocket.
- Teach children to go to a store clerk or police officer and ask for help if you become separated. They should
 never go into the parking lot alone. Identity a place inside the mall to meet if you become separated.
- Make sure to purchase age-appropriate gifts for children.
- If you shop on-line, make sure to use good judgment. Use only one credit card for all such purchases, and make sure to keep a record of your purchases and check them against the credit statement when it arrives. Do not use this card for any other types of purchases. Keep the credit limit on the card low.

Safety of Children During the Holidays:

- Do not leave children alone in vehicles.
- Make sure that children are aware of your plans and that you pick a place to meet inside the mall if you are separated.
- Make sure children know your rules about telling strangers of your family's plans for the holidays, such as travel plans.



- Make sure that small children know their name, address and a telephone number to contact a parent if an
 emergency arises.
- If during the holidays, children are to be left home alone with they are out of school, make sure that they are ready for the responsibility of being alone.
- Set house rules and make sure the children understand them and feel safe with them. Be sure to include visitors to the home while you are gone.
- Make sure that a trusted neighbor knows children are alone and what your rules are.

Holidays and Alcohol:

- Have non-alcoholic beverages available for party guests.
- Serve something to eat before serving alcoholic beverages.
- Have alternative transportation for intoxicated persons. Don't let guests drink and then drive. If necessary, employ a designated driver for your guests.

Halloween Safety Tips

The Indianapolis Police Department is suggesting the following tips to help keep our children safe during Halloween activities this year.

- · Wear light-colored clothing that's short enough to prevent tripping, and add reflective tape
- Make sure children can see well through facemasks, or use make-up, and that costumes are short enough so the child will not trip over it.
- Adults should accompany young children
- Go out in daylight and carry a flashlight in case of delay
- Stay within the neighborhood and only visit homes you know
- Watch for traffic
- Only give and accept wrapped or packaged candy
- Examine all candy before allowing children to eat it. Should you locate a suspicious item. Contact police as soon as possible at 327-3811. If injury is involved call 911.
- Keep costumed children away from pets. The pet may not recognize the child and become frightened and possibly aggressive.
- Avoid hard plastic or wood props such as daggers or swords. Substitute with foam rubber which is soft and flexible
- Consider block parties instead of trick-or-treating



Mobile Phone Emergency Contacts

A campaign encouraging people to enter an emergency contact number in their mobile phone's memory under the heading ICE (In Case of Emergency), has rapidly spread throughout the world. Originally established as a nation-wide campaign in the UK, ICE allows paramedics or police to contact a designated relative or friend in an emergency situation.

The idea is the brainchild of East Anglian Ambulance Service paramedic Bob Brotchie. Bob, 41, who has been a paramedic for 13 years, said: "I was reflecting on some of the calls I've attended at the roadside where I had to look through the mobile phone contacts struggling for information on a shocked or injured person. Almost everyone carries a mobile phone now, and with ICE we'd know immediately who to contact and what number to ring. The person may even know of their medical history."

By adopting the ICE advice, your mobile will help the rescue services quickly contact a friend or relative -which could be vital in a life or death situation. It only takes a few seconds to do, and it could easily help save your life. Why not put ICE in your phone now? Simply select your person to contact in case of emergency, and enter their name and phone number under the word 'ICE'.

It really could save your life, or put a loved one's mind at rest.

For more than one contact name, use ICE1, ICE2, ICE3 etc.